

MUSIC'S ROLE IN YOUTH'S COLLABORATIVE VIDEO CREATION

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INTRO

CHALLENGE

We know little about how youth work with and incorporate music as an element in the media-creation process.

MOTIVATION

The process of consuming and creating media is a formative experience for youth. They enjoy collaborating to make videos in educational and social settings. Understanding this process allows us to create systems which better support their needs and to maximize their benefit.

METHODS

We organized a group of middle school students in an after-school program with the goal of creating videos. The students spent two sessions creating videos of any kind, and two sessions creating videos which incorporated music.



Students filming in the hallway

Through observations of the students in this process as well as the videos they produced, we obtained key insights into their relationship with music when creating media.

FINDINGS

3 ROLES OF MUSIC IN YOUTH'S VIDEO CREATION

1 The primary role of music for youth's media creation is to dictate structure. Much of their videos follow patterns they identify in what they consume, e.g. reaction videos and video game gameplay.

Many memes, jokes and other videos rely on music as the constant which coheres them. Youth take note and use the same formulas for their own videos when they create "Rick-Roll" videos or use samples of songs as punchlines.

Because music so greatly structures their content, it is often at odds with the ad-hoc creation process most youth employ. Rarely does their process follow the discrete series of steps in traditional filmmaking. Students simply hit the hallways and begin filming. Narrative, scripting, filming and editing all happen at the same time. More often than not, the students don't have a 'final product' to show for their work: the process itself is an end.

This structure can be a challenge because it doesn't always align with the collection of footage students produce. They struggle to find ways to incorporate an element which doesn't naturally occur in their process.



2 Music sometimes becomes the final product, as opposed to a media asset for youth's creations. For example, multiple students created their own music using computer software. Another project entailed a "side-by-side" comparison of the different language versions of the same songs.

When music is the dominating media element, it has less of strict effect on structure because the student has control over it. The process shifts from creating a video which uses music to music which is accompanied by a video.

3 Some youth see music as an asset to fill a void in their creation. These students generally are engaged in the editing process and have identified a need for audio in their project. Students used music in this way to provide the soundtrack for a highlight video of the semester's footage as well as to accompany a timelapse of a drawing they made.



Students editing a video

DESIGN IMPLICATIONS

Lower the technical barriers for adding audio elements to video software youth use.

Final product is often secondary to the creation process, so designs should attempt to work pre- and post-production tasks into the core production process.